

First year fees-free

If your child is thinking about tertiary study, they may be able to receive their first year fees-free. If they are planning on industry training (where they are training in a workplace, or doing 'on the job' learning), they could get two years fees-free.

For more information and to check eligibility visit <https://www.feesfree.govt.nz/> or call the fees-free helpline 0800 687 775

Study jargon - EFTS

Qualifying for certain payments will rely on studying the required number of EFTS (Equivalent Full-time Student).

Studylink use EFTS to work out if someone is studying full time or part-time and to determine on-going eligibility for payments.

Usually, every paper or course has a certain amount of points or credits that represent the amount of study or workload you do. The general rule is 0.125 EFTS is equivalent to 15 credits or points.

<https://www.studylink.govt.nz/about-studylink/glossary/efts.html>

Student Loan

If your child qualifies for fees-free study they may still need to apply for a Student Loan for course-related costs or living costs. Only students studying full-time can access loans for course-related costs and living costs.

Remember though it is a loan and needs to be paid back. I'm sure we all know of people who, while studying, spent their living costs on fun things...

In order to stay eligible for Student Loan students need to pass at least half of their course work (EFTS) over a set period.

There is a lifetime limit of 7 EFTS (around 7 or 8 years of full-time study) for Student Loans.

If your child is under 18 when they sign their Student Loan contract you will need to give permission – this isn't as guarantor, the loan repayments will be their responsibility.

For more information visit:

<https://www.studylink.govt.nz/products/a-z-products/student-loan/index.html>

<https://ird.govt.nz/student-loans>

Student Allowance

Not every student qualifies for a Student Allowance so it is important for students to think about how they will afford to live, especially if they plan to go flatting or move into a hall of residence.

The good news is, for those who qualify, Student Allowance does not need to be paid back.

Students can also earn up to \$240.70 a week before tax before any allowance payments are affected.

Student Allowance is based on parental income until age 24, even if the student does not live at home. This calculator will help first-time students determine how much Student Allowance they may get:

<https://www.studylink.govt.nz/products/rates/calculators/parental-income-calculator.html>

Like with Student Loan, students must pass more than half of their EFTS to remain eligible, there is a limit of 200 weeks study (about 5 years).

Student Allowance does not get paid over the summer holiday so students will need to either get a job during this period or apply for Jobseeker Support Student Hardship while they are looking for a job.

For more information visit:

<https://www.studylink.govt.nz/products/a-z-products/student-allowance/index.html>

When to apply

The best time to apply is before 16 December, to make sure everything is sorted when study starts in 2023. Most people start applying in term 3 and term 4.

There is no need to wait until NCEA results come out in January. Students can even apply if they haven't decided where they want to study yet, or they're waiting on confirmation of their course.

Applications can be updated or withdrawn after submission.

How to apply

Applying is easy and all online. This link will walk first-time students through the process:

<https://www.studylink.govt.nz/online-services/apply/first-time/index.html>

Extra payments

There are extra payments that students may qualify for too that many don't know about:

- Accommodation Supplement
- Disability Allowance (think of this more as a health allowance – if your child has on-going health costs such as medication or specialist visits, they should apply)
- Temporary Additional Support

All of the above can be applied for using this form:

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/documents/forms/extra-help-application.pdf>